

Message Text

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PAGE 01 COPENH 05352 190745Z
ACTION PPT-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 CA-01 ISO-00 L-03 /018 W
-----056015 200643Z /10
R 181550Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7024

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FOR PPT/L

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: CPAS CASC LY
SUBJ: ARABIC TRANSLATIONS IN US PASSPORTS

REF: COPENHAGEN 4677, STATE 191733

1. EMBASSY COPENHAGEN WISHES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR AUTHORIZATION TO AFFIX CONSULAR SEAL ON ARABIC TRANSLATIONS FOR PURPOSES OF OBTAINING VISAS TO LIBYA. AS REQUESTED BY STATE REFTEL, APPROXIMATELY ONE AMERICAN CITIZEN PER MONTH ASKS FOR ARABIC TRANSLATION FOR LIBYAN VISA PURPOSES. WE ANTICIPATE A GRADUAL INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN CITIZENS REQUESTING THIS WITH THE CONTINUED EXPLOITATION OF OIL IN THE NORTH SEA AND THE GROWTH OF OIL WORKER TRAFFIC BETWEEN SCANDINAVIA AND LIBYA. WHILE MORE OF THE LIBYAN VISA APPLICANTS ARE LIKELY TO BE COMING FROM NORWAY THAN DENMARK, OUR EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THAT A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER BYPASS OSLO IN THEIR SOUTHWARD TRAVEL AND FLY DIRECTLY TO COPENHAGEN. COPENHAGEN IS, OF COURSE, ONE OF THE MAJOR AIRLINE TEMRINI IN WESTERN EUROPE, AND THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE SCANDINAVIAN AIRLINES SYSTEM.

2. TIEH THE DEPARTMENT'S HAVING FOUGHT AND LOST THE BATTLE OVER ARABIC TRANSLATIONS IN 1973 OR 1974, THE PROLIFERATION OF POSTS ABLE TO PROVIDE THIS SERVICE TO TRAVELLING AMERICANS SEEMS TO US A SECONDARY CONSIDERATION WHEN WEIGHED AGAINST THE INCONVENIENCE
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TRAVELLERS MIGHT SUFFER OTHERWISE. THE TYPICAL TRAVELLER FROM HERE TO LIBYA IS A BUSINESSMAN, AND IN BUSINESS TRAVEL TIME IS FREQUENTLY OF THE ESSENCE. WHILE THE BUSINESSMAN CAN BE AND IS GIVEN THE OPTION TO OBTAIN THE REQUISITE ARABIC TRANSLATION (SEALED BY THE CONSULATE) AND LIBYAN VISA THIS IN MOST CASES ENTAIL A DELAY OF A DAY OR MORE IN HIS TRAVEL. THIC CAN BE EXPECIALLY VEXING WHEN HE IS TRAVELING WITH SCANDINAVIAN COUNTER-

PARTS WHO ARE ABLE TO OBTAIN THE TRANSLATIONS LOCALLY WITH VERY
LITTLE DIFFICULTY.

3. WE FEEL THIS ISSUE SHOULD NOW BE VIEWED FROM THE STANDPOINT OF
CONVENIENCE TO THE TRAVELING PUBLIC RATHER THAN AS AN ISSUE
INVOLVING THE SANCTITY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN PASSPORTS AND
CONSEQUENTLY RENEW OUR REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO AFFIX THE
CONSULAR SEAL ON THE ARABIC TRANSLATIONS IN UNITED STATES
PASSPORTS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978COPENH05352
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780340-0877
Format: TEL
From: COPENHAGEN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780850/aaaabpkc.tel
Line Count: 72
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a6fd6f61-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION PPT
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 COPENHAGEN 4677, 78 STATE 191733
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1701080
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARABIC TRANSLATIONS IN US PASSPORTS
TAGS: CPAS, CASC, LY, US, DA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a6fd6f61-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014